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Editor's note: Dr. Ryan McIlhenny recently offered a lecture at Covenant College entitled "Two Kingdoms and Christian Scholarship." His participation at Covenant is a partial fulfillment of his ARCU lectureship for which he was appointed this year. A large portion of the talk focused on the historical reasons for why the Two Kingdoms perspective has become increasingly popular within the Reformed community.

Presentism and the Two Kingdoms Perspective



by Ryan McIlhenny

Neo-Calvinism has been the *raison d'être* of Reformed higher education. Even today, broadly evangelical as well as non-religiously affiliated educational institutions have benefited significantly from this robust outlook.¹ Sadly, the growing popularity of the so-called Two Kingdoms perspective — which is ironically coming out of the Reformed community — has taken aim at the Neo-Calvinist *apologia* for a distinctively Christian pedagogy. In his *Biblical Case for Natural Law*, David VanDrunen offers a succinct definition of the Two Kingdoms:

God continues to rule over all things. Nevertheless, God rules the world in two different ways. He is the one and only king, but he has established two kingdoms (or, two realms) in which he exercises his

rule in distinct ways. God governs one kingdom, which Luther often called the kingdom of God's "left hand" and Calvin the "civil" kingdom, as its creator and sustainer, but not as its redeemer. This civil kingdom pertains to temporal, earthly, provisional matters, not matters of ultimate and spiritual importance The other kingdom, which Luther termed the kingdom of God's 'right hand' and Calvin the 'spiritual' kingdom, is also ruled by God, but he rules it not only as creator and sustainer but also as its redeemer in Christ. This kingdom pertains to things that are of ultimate and spiritual importance.²

The Two Kingdoms position diverges from neo-Calvinism, not on sphere sovereignty, the antithesis, or common grace — three themes that make Two Kingdomers, much to their chagrin, partial neo-Calvinists — but on the cultural mandate and the reality of cosmic redemption. This is no benign disagreement. First, in the Two Kingdoms mind, Adam failed to fulfill God's command to fill, subdue, and rule over the creation. The new and better Adam, Jesus Christ, completed the task. Two-Kingdomers believe, consequently, that kingdom (sacred or ultimate) activity is limited to the sphere of the church, whereas social and cultural works are part of a shared or common human realm. With that distinction between sacred activity and cultural activity, the adjective "Christian" is superfluous, an obvious problem for colleges or universities that take the name of Christ. To be fair, it is true that in the arena of salvation, Christ accomplished the Father's requirement for perfect obedience. But in another sense, as neo-Calvinists stress, the cultural mandate is part of the created/natural order. All humans have been created to live in accordance with

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the cultural mandate, regardless of submission to or rebellion against God. Second, the Two Kingdom position limits redemption to the church. Again, in one sense, this is true: God through Christ redeems his own. But some may wince at the Two Kingdoms implication that redemption is *not* cosmic in scope. For neo-Calvinists, Christ restores a “groaning” creation — *all* creation, to be exact. This is the basis for the witness we show and the joy that we have in and through our cultural engagement.

The Two Kingdoms position diverges from neo-Calvinism, not on sphere sovereignty, the antithesis, or common grace ... but on the cultural mandate and the reality of cosmic redemption.

At the “Calvinism for the 21st Century” conference hosted by Dordt College in 2010, keynote speaker James K.A. Smith, professor of philosophy at Calvin College, was asked the question as to why the Two Kingdoms doctrine has reemerged as an issue of debate within the Reformed community? Smith, at that time, was unprepared to offer an answer. At least one of the leading Two Kingdoms representatives believes that he is recovering an important artifact of the Reformation tradition, an artifact essential to orthodoxy.³ Both neo-Calvinists and contemporary Two Kingdoms (who could also be labeled *neo*-Two Kingdoms) would agree that the recovery of the biblical way to be made right before God was at the heart of the Reformation. But does the contemporary restoration of the Two Kingdoms have the same weight as the recovery of the gospel? Is that restoration a matter of regaining lost orthodoxy?

History is central to knowledge and thus should be treated with the highest honor, but its users — including a host of academics (even historians) — unfortunately betray such tribute by using history for *presentist* purposes. In one important sense, the

revival of the Two Kingdoms debate has more to do with countering a contemporary embarrassment than in preserving a venerated past. Acknowledging that the Two Kingdoms position has become a welcomed salve for many suffering from culture war fatigue, this essay contends that its complete dismissal of its chief nemesis, neo-Calvinism — especially its image after Dooyeweerd — is much too hasty.⁴ The socio-cultural relevance of the Calvinistic worldview as articulated first by Groen van Prinsterer (1801-1876) and Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920), and later by Dirk Vollenhoven (1892-1978) and Herman Dooyeweerd (1894-1977), remains a more cogent biblical response to modernism — modernism at its peak and now in its time of crisis — than does the Two Kingdoms paradigm.

Neo-Calvinism and the Evangelical Right

A Two Kingdoms viewpoint was advanced by Michael Horton in *Beyond Culture Wars*, written about twenty years ago, as an alternative, not to neo-Calvinism per se but to the religious evangelical Right in general. And in truth, it should be noted that the evangelical Right has included many in the Reformed camp. Steve Mathonnet-Vander Well noted, in *Reformed Perspectives* a few years ago, that by the twenty-first century, “evangelicals (presumably including more than a few Dutch Reformed) were the mainstay of the conservative wing of the Republican Party.”⁵ Another writer for a popular online Reformed theology database unraveled the cords that linked neo-Calvinism to the evangelical political Right:

Neo-Calvinism branched off in more conservative movements in the United States. The first of these to rise to prominence became apparent through the writings of Francis Schaeffer, and a group of scholars associated with a Calvinist study center in Switzerland, called L’abri. This movement generated a reawakened social consciousness among Evangelicals, especially in response to abortion, and was one of the formative influences which brought about the “Moral Majority” phenomenon in the United States, in the early 1980s.

The more radical Calvinist movement that has been influential in American family and political life is called Christian Reconstructionism. Reconstructionism is a separate revision of Kuyper’s ap-

proach under the leadership of the late Rousas J. Rushdoony[.] ... Reformed scholar and essayist Not a political movement, strictly speaking, Reconstructionism has been influential in the development of the so-called “religious right”; it aims toward the complete reconstruction of the structures of society on Christian and Biblical presuppositions, although not in terms of “top down” structural changes, but through the steady advance of the Gospel of Christ as men and women are converted, and thus seeks laws and structures that serve them best.⁶

Similarly, staunch Two Kingdoms supporter Darryl Hart argues, in *A Secular Faith*, that the political conservatism among evangelicals at the end of the twentieth century “combined the doctrines of the kingdom of God” — presumably a one kingdom position — “and the sovereignty of Christ to yield the legitimacy of religion inserting its moral concerns into all aspects of life.” By the 1970s, Hart continues, evangelicals felt the urgent need to counteract “the loss of conviction that churches should stay out of politics and stick to the business of soul-winning and the exercise of spiritual ministry.”⁷ And the inspiration for such calls to political action, he continues, “came from a version of Dutch Calvinism originally articulated by Abraham Kuyper”:

The Lordship of Christ over all temporal affairs was arguably Kuyper’s most important reason for attempting to return the Netherlands to its former Calvinist glory, and the analogy for evangelical Protestants living through what appeared to be a decadent and secular period of American history was not difficult to fathom.⁸

Hart is not entirely wrong. The late Chuck Colson, a perfect example of a culture warrior, appealed “to Kuyper as a primary inspiration” for Evangelicals and Catholics Together (ECT). “Colson,” Calvin Seminary’s John Bolt writes, “made the appeal for evangelical-Catholic cooperation against the modernist revolutionary culture of death and destruction already in his inspiring and influential book, *The Body*.” In his explanation of the ECT alliance, Colson, reflecting on Kuyper’s Stone Lectures at Princeton Theological Seminary, anachronistically claimed that the moral issues

Europeans faced in Kuyper’s day were, in Colson’s words, “the very situation all Christians now face in America.”⁹

Neo-Calvinism and Theonomy

But Hart goes too far when he dumps all conservative evangelicals and neo-Calvinists into the same culture-war phalanx, wherein no compromise with the “secular” is ever possible: “The idea that the affairs of civil society or public policy are part of a cosmic contest between the forces of good and evil nurtures a zero-sum approach to government that leaves little room for compromise and raises questions about what to do with nonbelievers and idolatry.”¹⁰ Even more egregious is his linking neo-Calvinism to theonomy (a definite culture war phenomenon): “The neo-Calvinist insistence on biblical politics,” referencing James Skillen, former president of the Center for Public Justice, “paves the way for theonomy even if Kuyperians are uncomfortable with Greg Bahnsen.”¹¹ It seems that in Hart’s mind any cultural engagement that may have a redemptive cultural impact “has always seemed to be essentially theonomic with a progressive façade.”¹²

It is true that a handful of neo-Calvinists have travelled the (distorted) path of contemporary theonomy. Indeed, many have warned of the “theocratic temptation” that befalls neo-Calvinists, especially in the winner-take-all notion advanced by Hart.¹³ Kuyper’s language often sounded culture war-*ish*, as did Dooyeweerd’s, especially during the Dutch National Movement, and that of H. Evan Runner. Why is this? It is easy to misuse the “antithesis,” for instance, to construct a culturally fundamentalistic “us-vs-them” approach as R.J. Rushdoony and others of his ilk — Greg Bahnsen, Gary North, and their followers especially — have done with their opposition to humanistic public education, to a growing centralized state, to abortion, to pornography, and to homosexuality. These were certainly culture war militants. But is it fair to associate *all* neo-Calvinists with this group? Is theonomy endemic to a robust neo-Calvinist perspective on Christ and culture? (The situation is more complicated than I am making it out, for even staunchly conservative neo-Calvinist H. Evan Runner voted for Carter back in the day and criticized the evils endemic to neo-liberal capitalism.)

But what many consider peripheral, Hart makes core.

Neo-Calvinists regularly warn against the misuse of the Reformational notion of antithesis. “We know,” Dooyeweerd writes, “that in the heart of the Christian *himself* the apostate selfhood and the selfhood redirected to God wage a daily warfare.”¹⁴ Reformational physicists Tim Morris and Don Petcher agree:

Christians are not exempt from faulty thinking just because we are Christians. Without realizing it, any of us can be affected by other ground motives and cultural forces merely because we have been brought up in a communal way of thinking in our society. In other words, the real religious antithesis does not allow us to simply separate one people against another and be done with it.¹⁵

Unfortunately, not everyone uses the antithesis the right way. One has to wonder whether others are on the same page as Hart. Gregory Reynolds, Orthodox Presbyterian Church pastor and editor of *Ordained Servant*, reads *Living in God's Two Kingdoms*, by VanDrunen, with both culture wars and theonomy in mind: “The most eye-popping conclusion that VanDrunen comes to — he does so early in Part 1 (“First Things and Last Things,” pages 33-71) of [*Living in God's Two Kingdoms*] — is that the culture war is over, although he doesn't use these terms.”¹⁶ (Please note: Reynolds's use of “culture war” is confusing. For him the culture wars originated with the seed of the woman and the serpent. There is truth to this idea undoubtedly, but many understand culture war as the North American evangelical-political activism of the last forty years.) Reynolds also has theonomy in mind, believing that VanDrunen's critique of neo-Calvinism *is* a critique of theonomy. “VanDrunen takes on the theonomic exegesis,” he writes, “[doing] so with great finesse and yet oddly without mentioning Greg Bahnsen, who, as far as I know, is the major theonomic exegete of this [Matt. 5] passage, which many believe to be the interpretive linchpin of theonomy as an ethical system.”¹⁷

Two of the towering figures of neo-Calvinism, Abraham Kuyper and Herman Dooyeweerd, would have launched a herculean opposition to such prejudiced readings. Any proposal, Kuyper

wrote, which “simply wishes to duplicate the situation of Israel, taking Holy Scripture as a complete code of Christian law for the state, would ... be the epitome of absurdity.”¹⁸ Dooyeweerd likewise rejected the notion that “the only manifestation of the Christian state is its subservience to the Church as an institution.” If the church is indeed sovereign over the state, Dooyeweerd facetiously remarks, “[t]hen the body politic has to use its power of the sword to suppress the promulgation of doctrines rejected by the Church as heretical.” This, in his mind, is to confuse God's ordained social spheres. Dooyeweerd offers a simple — granted, a term rarely associated with Dooyeweerd — biblical concept of the state: “The political confession of faith in God's sovereignty over the life of the body politic has from the start been typical of a Christian view of the State.”¹⁹ A Christian view of the state is an affirmation of God's sovereignty over this sphere.²⁰

These qualifications matter little to Hart. Neo-Calvinists, Hart contends, are Christian political militants, since they lack the courage to offer a satisfactory critique of the culture wars:

many neo-Calvinists do actually denounce 2krs for not lending adequate support to the culture wars or for criticizing statements like the Manhattan Declaration (think Chuck Colson, Nancy Pearcey, and some disciples of Francis Schaeffer ...) [;], I am waiting to see the neo-Calvinist critique of culture war militancy. Criticizing the evangelical baptism of the Republican Party and George W. Bush does not count.²¹

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Again, Hart lacks critical analysis. Many neo-Calvinists have separated and continue to separate themselves from the culture wars. The problem is that it is hard — nearly impossible for a person of faith — not to be labeled a culture warrior when defending the role of faith in the public sphere.

How should believers disassociate the biblical directive of “taking every thought captive” from the culture wars? Bolt doubts whether we can give

up culture warfare completely:

It seems hard to deny *that* some sort of conflict about the moral foundations of American society and the consequent character of its civic life is taking place, particularly with respect to the public role of religion in shaping the moral foundations of American civil life. When we consider the hot-button political issues that are daily items in the news — abortion, affirmative action, euthanasia, the family, gay rights, the media and arts — there can be little doubt that America is embroiled in cultural conflict.²²

Bolt goes so far as to question the possibility of a “third way.”²³ Neither progressive evangelicals associated with Jim Wallis’s *Sojourners* nor the Two Kingdoms can escape a kind of cultural warfare. Even ignoring culture is cultural belligerence.

Neo-Calvinism beyond the Culture Wars (and Stone Lectures)

If believers must engage in cultural warfare, they must, according to Bolt, reconsider the “*manner* in which the battle is fought.”²⁴ Stephen Carter calls for an “attitude of respect”; Richard Mouw, for a civility undergirded by “kindness and gentleness”; and Craig Bartholomew and Michael Goheen, for appropriating “missional” in exchange for “militant.”²⁵ We can also add James Davison Hunter’s notion of “faithful presence,” emphasizing the importance of waiting on God.²⁶ Jeremiah blasted the cultural warriors of his day for failing to wait on the Lord. The exiles and aliens in the Old Testament as well as the aliens and sojourners in the New Testament era were and are encouraged to live quietly and peaceably. God’s people wait on the Lord. Yet at the same time, God’s people are to be salt and light to the world. The world can be moved by the good works of Christians, according to Heidelberg Lord’s Day #32 — good works in all of life that may win some over to Christ and his glory.²⁷ Even without cultural warfare, the Christian light *will* be seen.

Whether we believe in Two Kingdoms or cultural warfare or “faithful presence,” it is essential that we acquaint ourselves with three historical periods: the sixteenth-century Reformation, *fin-de-siècle* Europe, and North America in the late twentieth century. Kuyper and many of his con-

temporaries in both Europe and North America faced a real crisis — a crisis caused by advanced industrialization, urbanization, hubristic nationalism and imperialism, and the professionalizing — and unfortunately secularizing — of the intellectual world. The religious “ground-motive”²⁸ behind such modern developments, what Dooyeweerd would have seen as the “nature-freedom” faith dilemma, played a part in the disenchantment of the world. Dutch thinkers utilized Calvin to address a world facing the marginalization of God — and worse, according to Nietzsche, his death. This context hardly describes Luther and Calvin’s context. I will venture to say that the moralistic and in no way theologically concerned evangelical Right have failed to discern their own era.

While culture warriors have difficulty accommodating a pluralistic society, the large majority of conscientious neo-Calvinists do not. Christians, neo-Calvinists stress, should be *principled* in a *pluralistic* world. Kuyper certainly understood the reality of living as a Christian in such a world. “Kuyper’s genius,” James Bratt explains, “was to affirm the salience of traditional faith in this modernizing context by remarkably innovative means.”²⁹ Kuyper affirmed the twofold nature of pluralism: (a) plurality of social spheres and (b) plurality of religious commitments. Bratt continues:

Kuyper taught that in a modern society religious pluralism had to be respected, but the individualization and privatization of faith had to be avoided. Each confessional community (including secularists) must be granted its legitimate proportion of access to and participation in all sectors of public life, especially political representation, educational funding, and media access. Let a dozen flowers bloom, Kuyper said on his happy days; let their relative beauty compete for attention, and let the Lord at the last day take care of the tares sown among the wheat [definitely a challenge to the active millenarianism among 19th and 20th century evangelical conservatives and social gospel liberals].

[Kuyper is] needed to save American evangelicalism from the reflex patriotism it is perennially tempted to substitute for authentic Christianity as its guide in public life[;] ... evangelicals need more than ever to differentiate their professed Christian allegiance, and also their supposed social conservatism from the gods of the market and of mili-

taristic nationalism to which this group is so perpetually beholden. That is, evangelicals as well as other Americans could use a new application of Kuyperian sphere sovereignty and holistic biblical thinking.³⁰

Bratt's description of Kuyper seems quite cogent: "His 'conservative' heirs have amplified the themes of order, ontological fixedness, suspicions

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of secularism, and aspersions toward the Left. His 'progressive' progeny have followed his call for fresh thinking, epistemological openness, social justice, and aspersions toward the rich. Which of these is the 'real' Kuyper? Both, and more in between."³¹ The Reformed community, especially in North America, needs a re-contextualized Calvin to address the needs of a *post*-modern world: a neo-Calvinism beyond the culture wars and beyond the Stone Lectures.

Endnotes

1. Neo-Calvinism can be traced back to the work of Groen van Prinsterer (1801-1876), Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920), and Herman Bavinck (1854-1921). Each of these thinkers worked to preserve the importance of preserving and developing a Reformed or Calvinistic tradition within an increasingly secularized world. The term is also associated with the twentieth-century rise of Reformation Philosophy, a further development of the founders of neo-Calvinism, as articulated by thinkers like Dirk Vollenhoven (1892-1978) and Herman Dooyeweerd (1894-1977) among others.
2. David VanDrunen, *Biblical Case for Natural Law* (Grand Rapids: Acton Institute, 2002), 24.
3. VanDrunen, *Natural Law and the Two Kingdoms* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 14-15. See especially VanDrunen's *Living in God's Two Kingdoms* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2010). Stephen Grabill, *Rediscovering the Natural Law in Reformed Theological Ethics* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 2-4. For a presentation of Luther's Two Kingdom doctrine that differs significantly from the authors mentioned above, consider William J. Wright's *Martin Luther's Understanding of God's Two Kingdoms* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010). Readers may wonder whether there are competing Two Kingdoms paradigms.
4. James Davison Hunter defines culture wars as "political and social hostility rooted in different systems of moral understandings ... the end to which these hostilities tend is the domination of one cultural and moral ethos over all others." Davison quote in John Bolt, John Bolt, *A Free Church, A Holy Nation: Abraham Kuyper's American Public Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 357. To "hostilities," I would include a sense of "urgency" to the "moral."
5. Steve Mathonnet-VanderWell, "Reformed Intramurals: What Neo-Calvinism Gets Wrong" *Reformed Perspectives* (Feb. 2008). To be fair, however, Mathonnet-VanderWell suggests that many neo-Calvinists came to be quite chagrined by such an association. Indeed, there have been more than enough neo-Calvinists who have launched sustained aggression toward the culture wars <http://www.rca.org/page.aspx?pid=3771>
6. <http://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/articles/onsite/reforms.html>
7. Darryl Hart, *A Secular Faith: Why Christianity Favors The Separation of Church and State* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2006), 227
8. *Ibid.*, 227-28.
9. John Bolt, *A Free Church, A Holy Nation: Abraham Kuyper's American Public Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 353.
10. Darryl Hart, *A Secular Faith: Why Christianity Favors the Separation of Church and State* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2006), 229.
11. <http://oldlife.org/2012/10/not-so-fast/>
12. http://oldlife.org/2013/09/culture-redeemed/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=culture-redeemed
13. John Bolt, *A Free Church, A Holy Nation: Abraham Kuyper's American Public Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 312-13.
14. Dooyeweerd, *New Critique*, 137. Dooyeweerd revisits this in his discussion in part 2 of the *New Critique* "The Development of the Basic Antimony in the Cosmonomic Idea of Humanistic Immanence Philosophy" (175): "And in Christ as the new root of the human race, the whole temporal cosmos, which was religiously concentrated in man, is in principle again directed toward God and thereby wrested free from the power of Satan. However, until the return of Christ, even humanity which is renewed in Him still shares in the apostate root of mankind. Consequently, the

struggle of the Kingdom of God continues to be waged against the kingdom of darkness until the ‘consummatio saeculi.’”

15. Tim Morris and Don Petcher, *Science and Grace: God's Reign in the Natural Sciences* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2006), 85.
16. Gregory Reynolds, “The Culture War is Over: A Review Article,” *Ordained Servant Online* (April 2011), par. 6. http://www.opc.org/os.html?article_id=251.
17. *Ibid.*, par. 11. I am not targeting VanDrunen in this essay, but rather his readers. In at least one private conversation I have had with him, VanDrunen assured me that he is not addressing theonomists or culture warriors. That is not his focus. I believe him. Nothing in his writings intimates the aggressive agenda of Darryl Hart. Yet I also affirm that pre-theoretical (Dooyeweerd)/pre-scientific (Wolters)/pre-articulated (me)/subconscious influences guide our understanding of the world. Thus, given the neo-Calvinist understanding of worldview, it is more than plausible that VanDrunen is in fact tacitly writing against contemporary theonomic culture warriors.
18. Kuyper quote in James D. Bratt, *Abraham Kuyper: Modern Calvinist, Christian Democrat* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), 142.
19. Herman Dooyeweerd, *New Critique of Theoretical Thought*, Vol. 3 (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1969) 504.
20. According to VanDrunen, neo-Calvinism took a wrong turn not with Kuyper — or presumably a whole host of neo-Calvinists — but with Dooyeweerd. Strangely, in *Natural Law and the Two Kingdoms*, VanDrunen does not interact — at all — with Dooyeweerd's *New Critique*. VanDrunen concentrates on *Twilight*, *Roots*, and *The Struggle for a Christian Politics*. This is fine, but *NC* is a further albeit more complicated explication of these works. And much of what Dooyeweerd says about the possibility of a Christian state as well the idea of natural law comes in the latter portions (Book III) of the *NC*. This is a very narrow presentation of Dooyeweerd.
21. <https://oldlife.org/2012/10/not-so-fast/>
22. Bolt, *Free Church, Holy Nation*, 359.
23. *Ibid.*, 384.
24. *Ibid.*, 362.
25. *Ibid.* I have found helpful Richard Mouw's discussion of the manner of civil engagement in *Uncommon Decency: Christian Civility in an Uncivilized World* (Downers Grove, Ill: IVP, 2010). See also Mouw's *Abraham Kuyper: A Short Personal Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011) and *The Challenges of Cultural Discipleship: Essays in the Line of Abraham Kuyper* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012). Craig Bartholomew and Michael Goheen, *Living at the Crossroads: An Introduction to Christian Worldview* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008) and *Christian Philosophy: A Systematic and Narrative Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013).
26. James Davison Hunter, *To Change the World: The Irony, Tragedy, and Possibility of Christian in the Late Modern World* (New York: Oxford, 2010), 238.
27. Along with a change in manners, Christians need to bury once and for all the “paranoid style” and “status anxiety” that has preconditioned how we approach Right-wing evangelical conservatives. We need to stop using terms like irrational, ignorant, stupid, or extreme in characterizing conservative evangelicals — evangelicals who are trying to move beyond party politics. The emergence of big government — represented through increased taxation, the augmentation of an officious federal bureaucracy, abortion, gay marriage and the decline of “traditional” family values — leads to a “fed up” mood that galvanizes some to take back the political and cultural high ground in the country. This is the stereotype that has defined American conservatives for a little over a century. Since the 1950s, scholars have tried to make sense of the episodic outbursts of conservatism. Detailing the rise of the conservative Right during the hysteria of the McCarthy era, Richard Hofstadter, Daniel Bell, and Seymour Lipset, who borrowed from social psychology, suggested that a sense of persecution and the deterioration of cultural influence heightened a “paranoid style” or mood that characterized a cross section of American society. Stated simply, a loss (or the threat of loss) of status engendered activism, which often appeared to be fed by psychological distress, personality disorders, or fear rather than rational decision making.
28. A “ground motive” is the central or underlying pre-theoretical drive of the heart from which comes our interpretation of the world. Professors Tim Morris and Don Petcher define the ground motive as a “gut-feeling” or “basic driving force” “under the surface of the clearly rational that affects and motivates us, and through general commonality of deep convictions of the individual people in a common culture, it affects all of society. See Morris and Petcher, *Science and Grace: God's Reign in the Natural Sciences* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2006), 324. Dooyeweerd identified four ground motives undergirding western civilization: form-matter, creation-fall-redemption, nature-grace, and nature-freedom. These cultural ground motives, for Dooyeweerd, represent two competing heart motives (form and matter) that are never fully reconciled in historical development.
29. Bratt, *Kuyper*, xix.
30. *Ibid.*, 380-381.
31. *Ibid.*, xix.